



# MASSACHUSETTS ENVIROTHON

May 26, 2025

Glenn Burns, Principal  
Salem High School  
77 Wilson Street  
Salem MA 01970

Dear Principal Burns,

**Congratulations to the Salem High School Envirothon Team for their hard work and success at the 2025 Massachusetts Envirothon!** In addition to participating in the [competition](#) – and earning second place in the Water station and seventh place overall – the team was one of 3 teams across the state completing requirements for the Mass Envirothon [Community Engagement Award](#) for their work on the 2025 [Current Issue Forest Stewardship: Resilience for a Changing Climate](#).

2025 participating team members (all from Salem) were:

Zeyah Fee	grade 10
Ella Joy	grade 10
Rylan Workman	grade 11
Mark Qualkembush	grade 23

The team was coached by Salem science teacher Graeme Marcoux.

**The Mass Envirothon Community Engagement Award** recognizes teams who engage in thorough and wide-ranging community investigations as they prepare for their Current Issue presentation AND THEN take this new knowledge and put it to work in an action project in their community. Their work exemplifies the integration of science and civic knowledge and skills and the building of community connections that are critical for addressing environmental issues in a democratic society. Teams often engage in the kind of student-led civic activity envisioned in the Massachusetts 2018 [Act to Promote and Enhance Civic Engagement](#).

Qualifying for this award in 2025 required teams to become familiar with tree and forestland conservation initiatives that are occurring in their communities. They conducted in-person interviews, visited forested sites (large and small), and investigated and made recommendations for web resources and resource organizations. Documentation of teams' work – and reflection on what they found – was collected using the [Research and Action Checklist](#). In addition to documenting their efforts, Envirothon Community Award teams participate in a zoom interview that offers the chance for a wider public to learn about the teams' work and perspectives.

**What they did:** In their research, the Salem High School team explored three forest sites – Salem Willows, Salem Woods, and the Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary. Their investigations gave them an appreciation for the ways that forested areas can support ecosystem services – from clean water to community recreation – and the importance of native species to ecosystem health. They could see the disturbance that invasive species were causing, and they volunteered to help in efforts to remove them. And they went a step farther, turning the removal efforts into a scientific experiment that will test the

efficiency of three strategies to discourage invasives and encourage native species. Their work alongside community volunteers who are committed to protecting Salem's natural areas was inspiring as they thought about their own futures.

**Documentation of the Salem Envirothon team's work** can be found at the [2025 Community Engagement Awards](#) webpage.

Envirothon teams gain environmental knowledge and community connections through their research and action experiences. They develop teamwork, stewardship values, and skills for civic engagement. They show that they are capable of college level work and that they can make a real contribution to their communities. Their coaches deserve special commendation for the time and care they put into working with the teams.

Thank you for your support of the Salem team and their coach! More about the Envirothon can be found at <https://www.massenvirothon.org>.

Sincerely,



Will Snyder  
Massachusetts Envirothon Steering Committee  
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cc: Dr. Stephen Zrike, Superintendent  
Graeme Marcoux, Envirothon coach  
Chris Burke, Friends of Salem Woods  
Rachel Vresilovic, Salem Department of Planning and Community Development  
Shawn Small, Salem Native Nursery  
Representative Manny Cruz  
Senator Joan B. Lovely  
Stephanie Cooper, Undersecretary for Environment, Massachusetts EEA  
Rebecca Tepper, Massachusetts Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs  
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